

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Basic Officer Course
The Basic School
Marine Corps Combat Development Command
Quantico, Virginia 22134-5019

B0333

CONDUCT OF THE PATROL 3Student Handout**PART I- LINKUP OPERATIONS****1. Tactical Control Measures**

a. **Time of linkup.** Often expressed in terms of a window in which a group must complete linkup at the assigned primary or alternate linkup point.

b. **Linkup point.** Assigned in grid coordinates or as a detailed terrain description where two or more groups form together. Linkup points are established in order to reform the tactical integrity of a unit, whether that be after two infiltration groups have passed through their infiltration lanes or something as simple as the forming of a company after two simultaneous attacks have occurred. A number of sequential linkup points may be established to control the linkup of groups and the reforming of units. For example, platoon linkup points could be established in order to reform by squads. Company linkup points could then be established at separate sites in order to reform companies, etc. Alternate linkup points must be designated in the event that primary points are untenable.

(1) Site selection

(2) Linkup points should:

(a) Be relatively easy to locate at night or during periods of reduced visibility.

(b) Offer cover and concealment to reforming groups.

(c) Be isolated from known or likely enemy movement routes, key terrain and natural lines of drift.

(d) Offer access routes and escape routes.

(e) If necessary, be defensible for a short period of time.

c. **Rally points.** Rally points are positions where units will halt short of the linkup point in order to allow time to effect the linkup. They may be used as an assembly area where the unit will re-form. They may or may not be designated by higher.

d. **Assembly area.** The position where the unit will re-form. The rally point utilized by one of the units linking up may be used as the assembly area for the unit.

e. **Boundaries.** Boundaries may be placed into effect during linkups in order to decrease the risks of friendly fire.

2. Actions at Linkup Points. Techniques will vary by unit and according to METT-T, but must always emphasize security. Procedures should be established and pre-briefed regarding the control of the linkup. The use of contact teams, guides, and recognition signals will assist in linkup operations.

a. **Stationary unit.** The unit which will establish the link-up point. All other units will be designated as moving units. In addition to establishing the linkup point, the stationary unit will establish the area where the unit will assemble and will provide guides to bring all additional units to this assembly area (re-forming point). The duties of the stationary unit may be assigned to a specific unit, or to the first unit who arrives at the linkup point.

b. **Contact team.** A two-man team is sent out from a unit or patrol tasked to locate the linkup point, other units/patrols, or both. If the contact team is from the stationary unit (because they are pre-designated as such or they are from the first unit to arrive), they must also have an additional Marine to act as a guide for each subsequent moving unit.

c. **Far and near recognition signals.** Prearranged visual and/or audible signals which assist in an orderly linkup

and prevent friendly fire between groups linking-up. Too many signals or an overreliance on them should be avoided. Some examples might include:

(1) Challenge and passwords employed in the standard fashion.

(2) Visual indicators placed at contact points (e.g., stones placed in a prearranged pattern, infrared or directional colored chemlights, flashlight flashes, engineer tape on trees, etc.)

d. **Example.** Your platoon is infiltrating in squad-sized groups that will linkup at a predesignated linkup point. The first squad arriving at the linkup point is to assume duties as the stationary unit.

(1) Each squad will execute a long security halt at a rally point approximately 200-300 meters from the linkup point.

(2) The squad will then send a contact team (two or more) to the linkup point. The contact team executes the far recognition signal when it is within eyesight of the linkup point. If it is answered, then the contact team will advance to the linkup point. Within close proximity of the linkup point, the stationary unit will execute the near recognition signal and the moving unit will respond. Linkup has now occurred. The contact team will now return to its squad with a guide or guides from the stationary unit. The guide will then take the contact team's squad to the position where the unit is reforming.

(3) If the contact team's far recognition signal was not answered, then the contact team will advance to the linkup point to look for the prearranged signal (e.g., engineer tape around the base of a tree, infrared chemlite, flashlight flashes, etc.). If the prearranged signal is not there, then the contact team will verify using an alternate land navigation technique that they are at the correct linkup point. After the linkup point is verified, the contact team will assume duties as the stationary unit. The contact team will emplace any signals or signs necessary and will position itself where it can observe the linkup point. The contact team will notify its squad that it is assuming duties as the stationary unit. In this case, additional guides may have to be brought to the linkup point to join the contact team. If the rally point where the squad is located is not a good area to re-form units or if higher has designated an area where the entire unit will assemble, then the squad must reposition itself. After the unit repositions itself, it must make the contact team aware of its new position. Maximum emphasis should be placed on finding or designating a position to assemble and re-form units which minimizes the risk of friendly fire. Boundaries utilizing natural and manmade linear terrain features will help facilitate this.

(4) Each additional squad conducts steps 1-2 as stated above until the entire unit is linked up and assembled.

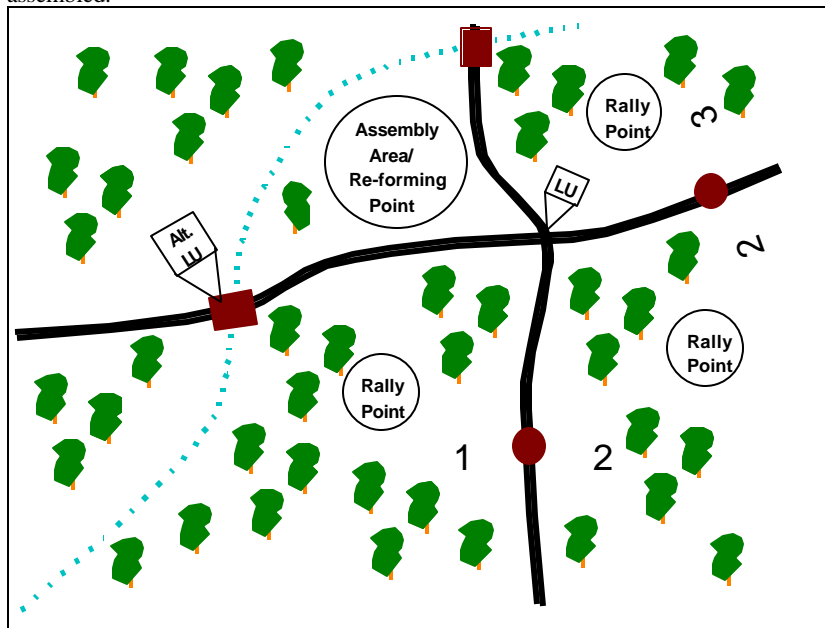


Figure 1. Linkup Control Measures which Minimize Risks of Friendly Fire

1. **Exfiltration.** "The movement of personnel or units from areas under enemy control (JCS Pub. 1). Exfiltration is normally associated with the efforts of individuals or units who have been separated, or have been bypassed by the enemy during the course of combat operations, to reach safety. This is not its only application, however, as units can conduct a number of offensive and defensive operations using exfiltration. Exfiltration then is the calculated movement towards larger friendly forces or possibly across an international border where sanctuary is expected. The techniques and procedures are identical and apply equally to both the exfiltration and infiltration. The difference between the two is in the purpose for which it is executed.

2. **Infiltration.** Movement through or into an area or territory occupied by either friendly or enemy troops or organizations. The movement is made, either by small groups or by individuals, at extended or irregular intervals. When used in connection with the enemy, it infers that contact is avoided (JCS Pub. 1). Infiltration is primarily offensive in nature but may also be used in the defense or during retrograde operations. The purpose of an infiltration is to move a unit by stealth in order to gain a more favorable tactical position. Infiltration is not only a procedure or technique by which individuals or units move with stealth, but also serves as a form of attack. Infiltration becomes the maneuver and is conducted in conjunction with a subsequent mission. Infiltrations are executed in order to accomplish a follow-on mission. This mission could be as simple as a unit extraction or as complicated as an ambush or a raid. For all intensive purposes, **the group conducting the infiltration operates as a patrol.**

3. **Phases of an Infiltration.** For planning purposes infiltrations are considered to be conducted in five phases. Ideally METT-T considerations provide sufficient time, etc., to allow the process to be executed as described below, but this will seldom be the case. In many cases infiltrations are executed from a FragO, with little time to plan or conduct recon patrols, etc. In ideal cases, infiltrations are executed in the following sequence:

a. **Reconnaissance.** During this first phase a unit seeks information regarding surfaces and gaps, as well as data concerning terrain and vegetation. Typical scouting and patrolling actions are used, and reconnaissance techniques employed.

b. **Preparation.** Regardless of size, infiltrating units (e.g., squad, platoon, company, battalion) make required preparations which include:

(1) **Organization.** Units are subdivided into infiltration groups. The senior commander might determine the specific size of infiltration groups based on his evaluation of METT-T. For example, a company might infiltrate by platoons, and platoons by squads or even fireteams.

(a) **Tactical unity.** As a general rule a force will conduct an infiltration by the largest possible unit compatible with the need for stealth, in order to increase control, speed and maintain responsive combat power.

(b) **Tactical spread.** Commanders must ensure the tactical spread of weapons, key personnel, etc., among the infiltration groups. Tactical spread avoids exponential losses in the event that a single infiltration group gets lost, compromised or arrives late.

(2) **Orders process**

(a) Unit leaders issue a standard 5 paragraph order that briefs instructions on the infiltration as well as the subsequent mission.

(b) Infiltration group leaders issue a patrol order (terrain model essential) for movement through the infiltration lane(s) as defined by the control measures provided by higher.

(3) **Rehearsals.** Rehearsals are essential and must be conducted at every level. This requirement is particularly true if infiltration groups consist of units or individuals who do not routinely work together. As most of the movement techniques of an infiltration are in actuality those of the patrol, most well-trained units will spend minimum time in rehearsing routine actions. Those actions required to accomplish the linkup and the actions associated with the subsequent mission must be rehearsed.

(4) **Rest.** The inherent nature of infiltrations are physically and mentally exhausting. Commanders can ensure that units are mentally and physically prepared by providing units and leaders an opportunity to rest prior to execution.

c. **Infiltration.** The third phase of the operation is the actual conduct of the infiltration. Commanders must establish control measures without being overly restrictive to subordinates. A fire support plan must be developed that supports all phases of the infiltration, as well as the subsequent mission. Finally, a communications plan is required that includes any additional mission specific information or requirements. Communication by exception should be the rule, especially in the movement phase of an infiltration.

d. **Linkup.** Infiltration groups negotiate their lanes and proceed to designated linkup points where they conduct a linkup with the rest of their unit. Linkups for an infiltration will likely occur in a number of stages. For example, rifle squads may linkup to reform their platoon at a specific point. Platoons may move and linkup to reform the company at a second designated linkup point. After the entire unit is reformed, it then executes its subsequent mission.

e. **Execution of follow-on mission.** The fifth and final stage of an infiltration is the execution of the mission for which the infiltration was executed.

4. **Tactical Control Measures.** An infiltration often requires unique control measures, in addition to any routine tactical control measures required to execute the subsequent mission. Control measures should be kept to an absolute minimum and should not restrict the initiative of subordinate leaders.

a. **Infiltration control measures.** The following control measures assist infiltration groups through the rendezvous stage of the operation. Commanders may consider assigning these and others (e.g., phase lines) as they deem appropriate.

(1) **Release point.** Designated as a "vicinity" in grid coordinates where the tactical unit breaks down into infiltration groups. More than one release point may be assigned in order to facilitate larger units breaking down into smaller elements.

(2) **Time of release.** A release time may be designated to begin the process of subordinate units and/or infiltration groups moving through release points. The subordinate unit or group may then move from its release point to a point of departure.

(3) **Point of departure.** The point of departure is designated as a "vicinity" in grid coordinates and is the location where infiltration groups enter designated lanes, and move into hostile territory commencing the infiltration.

(4) **Time of infiltration.** A time is often designated to commence the infiltration by groups from the point(s) of departure. This is the specific time in which the infiltration groups enter their assigned lanes.

(5) **Infiltration lanes.** These lanes are assigned by the commander coordinating the infiltration. The lanes extend through known or likely gaps, and indicate direction and width of the area through which the infiltration group(s) may move. Within the infiltration lane the group leader could assign specific routes, checkpoints, and even en route rally points

5. **Conduct of the Infiltration.** A unit conducting an infiltration moves to its release point and commences the process that will break it down into infiltration groups. The infiltration groups enter their assigned infiltration lanes at the designated time(s), and from their respective points of departure. Methods and techniques relating to the conduct of the operation will vary with the initiative and skill of commanders and leaders, and with the situation as defined by METT-T.

a. **General Concepts.** An infiltration is normally conducted in accordance with the following concepts:

(1) **Conduct the infiltration as a patrol.** From the perspective of the infiltration group leader, the operation is a patrol from the time of infiltration until the unit is assembled. The group leader should go through the normal patrolling steps when planning for the infiltration and should issue the standard patrol order to the entire group. Rehearsals of specific techniques to be conducted (e.g., danger areas, long security halts) are required. Unit integrity and pre-established unit patrolling procedures will dramatically increase efficiency as well as the probability of success.

(2) **Avoid detection.** Infiltration groups enter their lanes along primary routes. Enemy sightings are probable but contact with the enemy is avoided at all costs. Movement techniques, noise discipline, camouflage, radio silence and other security measures are especially critical. The infiltration group is in actuality conducting its movement in precisely the same way as a reconnaissance patrol (e.g., avoids detection and enemy contact). The group fights only to defend itself, and contact is broken as soon as possible. Enemy patrols are allowed to pass unmolested. Immediate action drills are defensive in nature.

(3) **Break contact if engaged.** If the infiltration group is detected it will fight only to the extent of defending itself. It will break contact immediately, reestablish its security and resume the infiltration as soon as it is able. Decisive engagement is always avoided. Large infiltration groups should have point and flank security elements that screen the main body from detection. If contact is unavoidable these elements engage the enemy while the main body breaks contact. The security elements will then break contact and resume the mission. The object is to deceive the enemy into believing that he has run into a patrol, rather than a unit conducting an infiltration. The enemy is not likely to come to this conclusion if contact is made with a platoon or larger unit.

b. **Methods of infiltration.** Units can conduct infiltrations using a number of different methods dependent on factors associated with METT-T. The unit can infiltrate as a whole or break down into a number of subordinate infiltration groups. The groups may use one or more lanes moving along them at the same or at staggered times.

(1) **Single infiltration lane.** The use of a single infiltration lane by a unit is not uncommon. Unit leaders have a number of options for conducting the infiltration based on the size of the lane, the size and skill of the unit, and the time allotted for the infiltration. The primary variables unit leaders work with in planning and executing single lane infiltrations are the size of the groups and the time the groups are to enter the lane. (See Figure 2.)

(a) Advantages of a single infiltration lane include:

1 _____ Coordination is easier over a single lane as there are minimal difficulties in moving groups up to and into lanes.

2 _____ Linkups are normally simple as groups essentially walk into the linkup point at the end of the lane.

3 _____ Reconnaissance requirements are minimized since only one lane or gap through enemy defenses is required.

(b) Disadvantages

1 _____ Additional time is required to move a unit over a single lane especially if the groups are squad sized or smaller.

2 _____ A routine is established by moving over or through a single area a number of times.

3 _____ The mission is jeopardized if the lane becomes untenable for any reason.

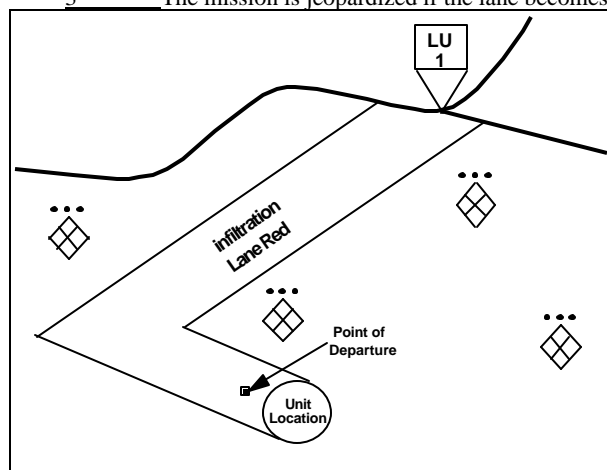


Figure 2. Single Lane Infiltration

(2) Multiple infiltration lanes. Utilizing multiple lanes is in most cases the method that allows the commander the greatest chance for success. Not only are more options available, but far more flexibility is inherent in this second method of infiltration. In this method the commander has more variables with which to work. Based on evaluation of METT-T, the commander must now establish the number of lanes and the number of groups per lane. As in the case of the single lane infiltration, the commander must also establish the size of the groups and the time(s) the groups will enter each lane. (See Figure 3.)

(a) Advantages

1 _____ Multiple lane infiltrations decrease the possibility of compromising the mission if one lane becomes untenable.

2 _____ This method normally takes less time to execute and is conducted over a broader front.

(b) Disadvantages

1 _____ The multiple lane method requires a more extensive reconnaissance effort.

2 _____ Coordination is more difficult because there are a number of groups moving independently over a wide area.

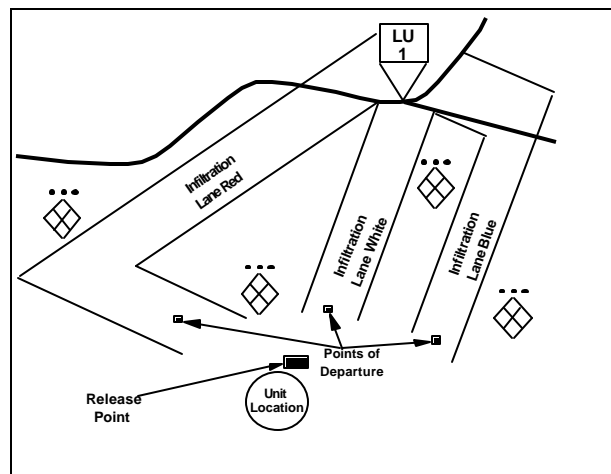


Figure 3. Multiple Lane Infiltration.

c. **Fire support plan.** Some specific fire support planning considerations are unique to the conduct of an infiltration. The commander plans indirect fires that will support both the infiltration and the subsequent mission. Fires in support of the infiltration are planned to support the infiltration groups during the infiltration and rendezvous phases of the operation. They are planned to:

(1) **Create diversions.** Fires planned on enemy surfaces that are adjacent to the infiltration lanes will serve to deceive and/or confuse the enemy. They may also suppress his ability to detect or interfere with infiltration groups. Noise from these fires can mask the movement of the infiltration groups. They can be delivered erratically to deceive the enemy as to their intent (e.g., harassing and interdiction fires). Indirect fires could be massed on enemy forward positions in order to convince the enemy that an attack is imminent. These fires could be combined with a feint or demonstration to increase the deception.

(2) **Protect infiltration groups.** Indirect fires should be planned within the infiltration lanes in order to support the movement of the groups along primary and alternate routes. These fires are almost identical to those planned in support of a patrol and are designed to assist the group in executing immediate actions if enemy contact is experienced. Targets should be planned to support the infiltration groups at all rally points as well as at the rendezvous points.

PART III- PATROL BASE OPERATIONS

1. **Patrol Base.** By definition, a patrol base is a position established when a patrol or several patrols halt for an extended period of time in an area not protected by friendly forces.

a. **Purpose.** The general purposes of a patrol base are to provide the patrol a relatively safe haven and to allow it to:

- (1) Cease movement in order to avoid detection.
- (2) Hide during lengthy reconnaissance of an objective.
- (3) Issue orders and make final plans.
- (4) Make preparations for a new mission.
- (5) Execute several missions from the base.
- (6) Rest, re-supply, conduct maintenance and prepare food.

b. **Principles.** The following general principles are associated with establishing a patrol base:

- (1) Planning
 - (a) The plan for establishing the patrol base is made when the conduct of the patrol is planned.
 - (b) The plan for establishing the patrol base is contained in the patrol order. A separate patrol base annex may be used.
 - (c) The initial location of the patrol base is tentative, and is based on information from map and/or aerial reconnaissance, and reports from previous patrols. A primary and alternate site is always selected.
 - (d) A fire support plan is developed to provide the patrol leader with the option of either defending the patrol base, or escaping from it, as the situation dictates.
 - (e) Time occupied. A tentative plan for the length of time the patrol base will be occupied is made. Even if the patrol's mission requires it to remain in the execution phase for a prolonged period of time, it will move bases rather than remain in one too long. The exact time that is "too long" is impossible to establish, and is totally METT-T dependent. A factor that has major impact, however, is the amount of radio traffic emitted from inside or around the patrol base.
- (2) Primary concerns. The two primary concerns associated with any patrol base are the absolute needs for secrecy and security. Security in a patrol base avoids attack or surprise by an enemy force that has located the base. At the same time, the greater the degree of secrecy maintained within a patrol base, the greater the degree of security results.

c. **Site selection considerations**

- (1) Mission. A patrol base must be located so that it best enables the patrol to accomplish its mission.
- (2) Passive security measures
 - (a) Select terrain that is considered to have little tactical value from the enemy's point of view, or difficult terrain that would make it hard for the enemy to reach unnoticed.
 - (b) Consider an area where there is ample concealment (e.g., dense vegetation, preferably with bushes and trees that spread out close to the ground). Consider aerial as well as ground detection.
 - (c) Terrain should be defensible for at least a short period of time.
 - (d) Select isolated terrain. **Avoid the following:**
 - 1 _____ Known or suspected enemy positions.
 - 2 _____ Areas of human habitation.
 - 3 _____ Ridgelines and topographical crests.

4 _____ Avenues of approach such as roads, trails, streams, or other natural lines of drift.

(e) The site should allow for covered and concealed approach and withdrawal routes.

(3) Water source. The patrol base must be near, but not on, a water source. The base is preferably out of hearing distance of the water if it runs as rapids or falls, as the sound of water running could mask the sound of an approaching hostile force.

(4) Comfort. In order for the base to serve any function as a rest and refitting facility, it must allow for some degree of reasonable comfort.

(5) Re-supply. If re-supply is a requirement, consider both the means of re-supply and the base's proximity to landing zones, roads, trails, etc.

(6) Communications. On the modern battlefield if you can be seen or heard, you can be killed. Listening silence is always a requirement, but communicating from inside or near a patrol base is a danger that must be avoided. Communication windows, communication by exception, directional antennas, terrain masking, brevity codes, etc., are all effective means in limiting the electronic signature emitted from the base. Be aware, however, that some sites limit the ability to communicate.

d. **Occupation of a patrol base.** The occupation of a patrol base is most often unit SOP dependent, conducted as a battle drill with rehearsed techniques, procedures, etc. Below are some typical considerations and procedures for occupying a patrol base. These are not the only methods possible.

(1) If possible, occupy during times of limited visibility.

(2) Always use covered and concealed approaches.

(3) Halt the patrol short of the base's tentative location. Establish close in security and conduct a leader's reconnaissance of the tentative site. (See Figure 4.)

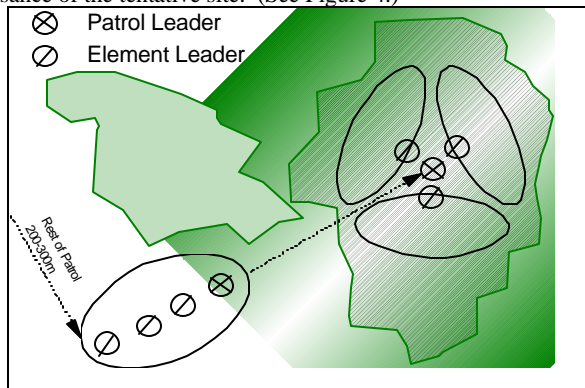


Figure 4. Leader's Recon of the Patrol Base Site.

(a) The patrol leader designates point of entry into the site as 6 o'clock, then moves to the 'center' of the site and designates it as patrol headquarters.

(b) Each subordinate leader conducts a reconnaissance of his or her portion of the site, then returns to patrol headquarters.

(c) The patrol leader sends at least two personnel to bring up the remainder of the patrol.

(4) The patrol doglegs (makes a 90 degree turn) into the base with all members entering the base at one point in a single file. (Designated patrol members are assigned duties to remove signs of the patrol's presence).

(5) Each subordinate leader meets his or her unit at the patrol headquarters and moves the unit into position on the perimeter. (See Figure 5.)

(6) The patrol leader checks defensive effectiveness of the perimeter.

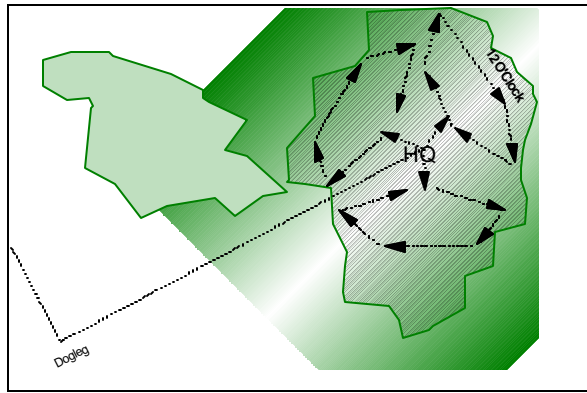


Figure 5. Occupation of the Patrol Base

e. **Operation of the patrol base.** Considerations associated with the efficient operation of a patrol base primarily revolve around security, defense, and housekeeping requirements.

(1) Active security measures.

(a) Reconnaissance. Conduct local reconnaissance patrols forward of the perimeter to locate avenues of approach and positions for SPs/LPs, signs of the enemy or civil population, etc. Ensure that all members know that patrols are out. Reports are made to the patrol leader upon return of all local patrols.

(b) Sentinel/listening posts (SPs/LPs). Establish SPs/LPs on all likely avenues of approach or on commanding terrain that provides observation. Ensure positive communications.

(c) Evacuation plan. Establish and brief to all members of the patrol. This plan must also include the escape and evasion (E&E) procedures.

1 Withdrawal routes. Select two or more routes that provide cover and concealment, and ease of movement to rallying points or to the alternate patrol base.

2 Rally points (RP). Always designate in anticipation of attack or compromise. Patrol members will reorganize at the designated RP.

3 Alternate patrol bases. Designate so that the patrol can complete its mission if the primary base is compromised, or becomes untenable prior to mission completion.

4 Alarm. Designate an alarm to alert the patrol to evacuate the patrol base. Code words are used to designate routes and rallying points.

(d) Alert plan. Decisions are required by the patrol leader regarding the specifics of how security on the perimeter is to be maintained at night, or during critical evolutions.

1 Percent alert. Normally 100% alert is maintained until local reconnaissance has been conducted and SPs/LPs have been posted.

2 Stand-to. Generally stand-to will go on any defensive line just prior to sundown and just before sunup (EENT \pm 30 minutes, BMNT \pm 30 minutes). This is a critical time to a defender as it is the most opportune time for a hostile force to attack. During any stand-to, all noise and movement ceases, and all gear, equipment and weapons are ready for instant defense and the possible evacuation of the site.

(e) Entrance/exit point. A patrol base uses only one entrance/exit point. Ensure that this point is camouflaged and well guarded (eliminate signs and tracks continually).

(2) Passive security measures.

(a) Light discipline. Light discipline, including infrared light, is critical in avoiding detection. Use of small flashlights should be with red or blue lens only and even these should be held close to, or below ground level. When lights are in use, they should also be under double cover (e.g., ponchos, poncho liners, shelter half, etc.). Fires are used only in the most extreme circumstances and in any case, should be very small and below ground level. Any light presents an extreme hazard to a patrol base, and it should be remembered that the smallest light source, even IR, can be seen for miles by any light intensification device (e.g., aircrew night vision goggles, hostile patrols so equipped, etc.).

- (b) Noise discipline. Noise discipline is critical, particularly at night, and patrols should use other battlefield sounds to mask its own noises.
- (c) Movement discipline. Keep movement to an absolute minimum and for required duties only.
- (d) Camouflage discipline. Continually monitor and improve as necessary.
- (e) Gear discipline. Individual equipment is packed and ready to move at all times.
- (3) Plan for defense. By its very nature, a patrol base assumes a perimeter defense. Defensive measures are planned in the same way as any perimeter defense, but a patrol base is normally defended only when evacuation is not possible.
 - (a) Assign sectors of fire, principal directions of fire (PDFs), and final protective lines (FPLs) as in any perimeter defense.
 - (b) Complete fighting positions are generally not prepared. Reliance and improvement of natural cover is the rule. Prone fighting positions may be prepared depending on time, absence of natural cover, concealment, etc.
 - (c) Indirect fires are planned as part of the defense and in support of evacuation.
 - (d) Mines and boobytraps--command detonated--are employed as part of the defense and in support of evacuation. Use claymores to cover entrance into patrol base as well as evacuation routes out of the patrol base.
 - (4) Communications. As stated above, listening silence and communication by exception is normally the rule. Prior coordination with the senior command will provide for communication windows, brevity codes, etc. Directional antennas should be utilized, and the plan must allow for communications with the senior headquarters, SPs/LPs and all subordinate units.
 - (5) Maintenance. Weapons are broken down and cleaned twice daily and more often when required. An SOP for weapons cleaning is established in order that all weapons are not being cleaned at the same time.
 - (6) Sanitation and personal hygiene.
 - (a) Keep feet clean and dry by applying powder and using dry socks. Care for feet one foot at a time.
 - (b) Wash, shave, and brush teeth using water as available.
 - (c) Use "catholes" outside the perimeter during daylight and inside the perimeter at night. Make sure user is guarded, and all hands know when someone leaves the perimeter.
 - (d) Trash is collected and carried back to friendly lines when the mission is complete. Ration packaging is broken down and minimized prior to initially leaving friendly lines.
 - (7) Messing. Stagger eating times to maintain security.
 - (8) Water Re-supply. Establish a limit of two trips for water supply before moving the patrol base. Additional trips increase the risk of compromise. Ensure security is provided with the water re-supply party.
 - (9) Logistical Re-supply. Use distant drop and/or landing zones or points, so that patrol base and possible objectives are not compromised. Send security with the logistics party to pick up supplies.
 - (10) Rest. Rest is allowed only after all necessary tasks are accomplished. Stagger rest periods to maintain security.
 - (11) Planning and conduct of operations.
 - (a) Limited information is the rule, as information is normally why the patrol was ordered in the first place. Any new mission, or an alteration of the original one sent via radio, will provide very little information.
 - (b) Use FragOs and SOPs to the greatest extent possible.
 - (c) Orders are normally issued without assembling all patrol members at one time.
 - (d) No test firing of weapons is possible.

(e) Little possibility for rehearsals may exist, but this shortfall can be compensated for by using the brief-back technique and by using extremely detailed terrain models.

(f) Adjust the perimeter by shifting personnel when individuals depart for some reason.

(12) Departure. Once the patrol's mission is complete, or the leader decides the base has been occupied for too long consistent with security, the base will be abandoned. The patrol should leave no signs of its presence in order not to alert the enemy that patrol activity is taking place. The departure should be both orderly and organized. Complete security is maintained at all times.

PART IV- DUTIES OF THE PLATOON COMMANDER IN PATROLLING OPERATIONS

1. **Overview.** In any combat situation, or in any area where there is a threat of attack, such as a rear area threatened by guerrillas or a facility that is under threat of a terrorist attack, all Marine personnel, not only infantry, must know how to conduct a patrol. As an officer, your main job is normally not that of patrol leader. Instead, your duties will likely entail that you ensure your unit is adequately trained in patrolling operations, and that all patrols you send out are adequately prepared. In addition, it will likely be your responsibility to ensure that adequate means are available to track your patrols, to assist them in fire support and to maintain communications with them. The success of the patrolling effort depends largely upon the preparations you make and supervise before the patrol leaves friendly lines.

2. **Training.** Additional guidance for training your unit for patrolling operations can be found in B0328, Appendix A *Patrol Tips*.

a. **Individual training.** The training necessary to prepare the individual Marine for patrolling should focus on developing:

- (1) Weapons and marksmanship training.
- (2) Observation skills.
- (3) Reporting.
- (4) Field skills.

b. **Team training.** Team training is essential to successful patrolling. Premature and unordered actions by members of the patrol destroy coordination and control. Leaders should be trained to issue their orders calmly, as this ensures confidence and discipline and avoids misunderstanding. Patrol members must work together and fight as a team.

3. **Commander's Duties.** The commander has several responsibilities when sending out patrols:

a. **Determine patrol requirements.** The need for a patrol derives from the commander's stated missions (issued by the commander) and implied missions (secondary or supporting efforts necessary to accomplish the stated mission). This requires analysis of the unit's mission and determining the necessary reconnaissance and/or combat tasks which must be performed to achieve it. By considering all component elements of the mission and the forces and time available, the commander develops an overall concept of operations to include the patrol plan and the specific tasks and training for each patrol.

b. **Determine patrol size**

(1) In general, patrols should consist of the least number of Marines needed to accomplish the mission. However, this general rule must be tempered with the positive influences of maintaining unit cohesion and with other competing manpower requirements (manning the defense, rest etc.)

(2) A comprehensive METT-T analysis will guide the commander during this step. As a general guideline, combat patrols are larger because it is necessary for them to have the capability to fight offensively. Reconnaissance patrols are smaller, because they have to move quickly and only fight if necessary to break contact or defend themselves.

c. **Assign units to conduct the patrol.** The nature of patrolling does not normally permit picking and choosing each member of each patrol, nor the luxury of allowing that unit time for sufficient rehearsal in order to permit it to become a cohesive unit. Thus, maintaining the integrity of the existing unit is critical to the commander when assigning patrol missions. In assigning the unit a patrolling mission, the commander considers the skill and experience of the unit leader and the unit. To provide operational depth and equitable apportionment of hazardous assignments, the commander ensures that each subordinate leader and unit acquire the skills and experience necessary to conduct successful patrols. Assignment of patrol units must consider the commander's concept of operations as a whole and the plans for subsequent employment of assigned forces after completion of the assigned patrolling mission.

d. **Provide patrol unit(s) adequate time to prepare.** The commander should not dominate the patrol's available preparation time and should complete the mission analysis, estimate, and preparation of orders sufficiently early to allow the patrol leaders and their units to prepare. Warning orders should be utilized to alert subordinates of possible requirements and afford them the opportunity for concurrent planning.

e. **Provide patrol leader all relevant information.** The patrol leader will need all information necessary to compile a detailed thorough patrol order. See B0334, Combat Orders II for examples of the amount of information and detail necessary. Commanders dispatching their own patrols will require additional independent thought in two areas:

(1) **Route Selection** - either General or Exact. General routes are defined by checkpoints. Exact routes are defined in terms of avenues of approach or other terrain features.

(a) Checkpoints are a means of control between parent unit and patrol. These locations are decided upon and coordinated before the patrol leaves, so that both the patrol members and parent unit will know where the patrol is when the patrol reports in. The parent unit can follow the progress of the patrol without the need of transmitting coordinates which the enemy could monitor. If checkpoints are utilized, the patrol leader treats them as individual objectives to be searched and cleared.

(b) Vary routes. Never establish a routine pattern or assign the same route back to friendly lines.

(c) Maximize cover and concealment. Before starting on a mission, conduct as detailed a reconnaissance as is possible (visual, aerial, or map reconnaissance) in order to select the best route possible according to available cover and concealment and indicated enemy activity.

(2) Intelligence requirements. These may be passed down from higher, or you as the commander may have to determine them. These intelligence requirements generally take the form of:

(a) Intelligence requirements (IRs): a requirement for intelligence to fill a gap in the command's knowledge and understanding of the battlefield or threat forces.

(b) Priority intelligence requirements (PIRs): an intelligence requirement associated with a decision that will affect the overall success of the command's mission. PIRs are a subset of IRs and are prioritized.

(c) Specific intelligence requirements (SIRs): describe the information required to answer all or part of an intelligence requirement. A complete SIR describes the information required, the location where the required information can be collected, and the time during which it can be collected.

(d) Named areas of interest (NAIs): the geographical area where information that will satisfy a SIR can be collected. NAIs are usually selected to capture indications of threat intentions or battlefield conditions.

f. **Provide required skills and equipment.** There will be situations when the unit assigned to conduct a patrol does not have the necessary technical skills or equipment organic to it to successfully accomplish the patrol mission. In these cases, additions (attachments) are made to the unit. Examples are:

(1) Machine gun and/or assault rocket launcher (SMAW) team/squad.

(2) Forward observers (mortar/artillery).

(3) Corpsman.

(4) Other personnel as required (radio operators, tracked vehicle crewman, scout snipers, translators, engineers, demolition experts, photographers etc.)

g. **Provide miscellaneous support.** The commander must ensure that the patrol leader is provided with the necessary food, water, ammunition, radios and batteries, maps, special clothing, and any other items required by the unit (to include attachments) for successful mission accomplishment. Postpatrol support such as NBC decontamination must also be planned for if required.

h. **Review the patrol leader's plan and preparations.** Once the patrol leader has been given the mission, conducted a visual and/or map reconnaissance, and developed a plan, the commander may review the patrol leader's understanding of the mission and the plan for achieving it. This discussion between the patrol leader and commander is useful to ensure that the patrol leader understands the desired result and is properly prepared as well as providing the opportunity to ask for clarification or additional support, if required. In addition to this "backbrief", the commander may also choose to inspect the patrol prior to departure.

i. **Ensure adequate means are set up to track and assist the patrol.** It is the responsibility of the commander who has operational control of the patrol to ensure that adequate means are available to assist, track, and communicate with the patrol. Personnel who can assist in the coordination of fire support and who are familiar with the mission of the patrol must also be available to continuously monitor the patrol.

j. **Debrief the patrol.** Upon return of the patrol, the commander receives the patrol report at a debriefing attended by the patrol leader and all patrol members. While there is a standard patrol report format, necessary information is recovered with the commander's needs and patrol's mission in mind. The debriefing should be conducted as soon as possible following the patrol's return, while information is still fresh in the minds of the patrol members. A patrol report may be required by the tasking commander. If necessary, the patrol report is generated based on the information recovered during the debrief. If the situation permits, the report is written and supported by overlays and/or sketches. The patrol leader's report should be a complete

account of everything of military importance observed or encountered by the patrol while on the assigned mission. The leader of a patrol should have all members of his patrol signal or report to him immediately any information obtained. These reports should not be restricted to information about the enemy, but should also include information about the terrain, such as newly discovered roads, trails, swamps, and streams. The leader includes the following information in his report to the officer dispatching the patrol:

- (1) Size and composition of patrol.
- (2) Tasks and purpose (mission).
- (3) Time of departure/time of return
- (4) Routes, out and back (show by sketch, azimuth, trace on map).
- (5) Terrain (general description to include any manmade or natural obstacles and critical terrain features which, if occupied by either enemy or friendly forces, would allow them to control the surrounding area).
- (6) Enemy (size, activity, location, unit, time, equipment).
- (7) Any map corrections (show on map).
- (8) Miscellaneous information (everything not covered elsewhere in report).
- (9) Results of encounters with the enemy.
- (10) Condition of patrol, including disposition of any dead or wounded.
- (11) Conclusion and recommendations.

k. **Ensure the patrol leader conducts a patrol critique.** After the patrol has rested and eaten, the patrol leader should hold a critique. Constructive criticism is made. It is an excellent time to prepare for future patrols by going over lessons learned as a result of the patrol. To wage combat successfully, a commander must have accurate, detailed, and timely information about the enemy, the terrain, and adjacent friendly units. Well-trained scouts and capably-led patrols are among the most effective tools the commander has for acquiring the necessary information.

4. **Summary.** This class provided you with detailed guidance on the tools and techniques required to conduct linkup operations, infiltration/exfiltration, and patrol base operations. Future field exercises will give you a practical understanding of these important operations. In addition, this handout should have provided you with an insight into the likely role you will play in patrolling operations as a commander in the FMF.